

**To:** Enck, Judith[Enck.Judith@epa.gov]  
**Cc:** Spalding, Curt[Spalding.Curt@epa.gov]  
**From:** Szaro, Deb  
**Sent:** Thur 5/12/2016 1:34:47 PM  
**Subject:** Re: News Clips (PFOA)

Thanks.

Sent from my iPhone

On May 12, 2016, at 9:05 AM, Enck, Judith <Enck.Judith@epa.gov> wrote:

<image001.gif>

Fyi but also see last article. Deb, I know you have a google search but wanted to make sure you saw that one

**From:** Rodriguez, Elias **On Behalf Of** Region2 PAD News  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 12, 2016 8:19 AM  
**To:** R2 EPA Region 2 (EPA Staff) <R2\_EPA\_Region\_2\_EPA\_Staff@epa.gov>  
**Subject:** News Clips (PFOA)

### **Times Union: Gibson sends letter to House committee seeking Hoosick Falls probe (updated)**

By Kenneth C. Crowe II

May 11, 2016

U.S. Rep. Chris Gibson is asking the House of Representatives to investigate how state and federal officials responded to PFOA contamination of drinking water in Hoosick, Hoosick Falls and Petersburg.

Gibson, R-Kinderhook, wrote the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform Chairman Jason Chaffetz, R-Utah, Tuesday to request the committee investigation.

Gibson expressed concern about the lack of accountability and the failure of the state Legislature in finding out what happened with the contamination of public and private drinking water systems by perfluorooctanoic acid in these communities in his district.

“Critical questions regarding the actions of the federal Environmental Protection Agency, New York State Department of Health, and New York State Department of Environmental Conservation remain unanswered,” the congressman wrote. “Regrettably, the New York Legislature has changed course and now will not conduct oversight hearings on what went wrong and why, after stating they would be holding hearings in the matter. This has only

increased frustration and concern amongst many of my constituents and myself that our regulatory agencies are not facing the necessary and appropriate oversight of their agencies.”

Update: Democrat Zephyr Teachout, who is running for Gibson’s 19th Congressional District seat, applauded the Republican’s call for an investigation:

Clean water is our precious natural resource—essential for our economy, precious to our environment and essential for our health. I applaud Congressman Gibson’s call for federal hearings on the crisis in Hoosick Falls. Big corporations and powerful insiders have warped the laws that should protect our communities and shut out the voices of the people whose health and livelihood are at stake.

Link to letter: <https://www.scribd.com/doc/312276345/Letter-to-Chairman-Chaffetz-1>

## **Rep. Gibson calls for Congressional investigation of Hoosick Falls PFOA response**

By Kevin O'Toole

May 11, 2016, 6:51 pm

WASHINGTON, DC (NEWS10) – Congressman Chris Gibson announced Tuesday he is calling for an investigation into the response by New York State and federal officials to the PFOA contamination of drinking water in Hoosick Falls and Petersburg.

The announcement came as a letter to House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform Chairman Jason Chaffetz.

High levels of PFOA, a chemical used in manufacturing, have been detected in public and private wells in Hoosick Falls and Petersburg. The contamination has forced residents to drink bottled water and undergo health screenings in recent months as local officials have worked to install filtration systems and identify new sources of drinking water.

Congressman Gibson says although there have been actions taken to address the contamination, residents remain deeply concerned about potential ongoing health risks to their families.

Gibson says residents are growing increasingly frustrated with the lack of accountability to “find out what happened and why it was allowed to go on after the initial detection of the contamination of their water supply”.

The New York Legislature has declined to hold oversight hearings into the PFOA contamination issue, so Gibson is calling on the House Oversight Committee to step up in its place.

Congressman Gibson is asking Chairman Chaffetz to “look into this matter immediately so that the mistakes can be identified, accountability can be achieved, and recommendations based on the lessons learned can be implemented moving forward.”

## **Rep. Gibson calling for investigation into PFOA crisis**

WRGB

By Staff

May 11th 2016

RENSSELAER COUNTY--Rep. Chris Gibson is asking a congressional committee to investigate the state and federal response to the PFOA crises in Hoosick falls and Petersburg.

Rep. Gibson says the actions of the EPA and State Health and Environmental Conservation departments are unanswered.

In a statement he wrote in part "Many of my constituents are deeply concerned with potential ongoing health risks to their families, delayed and confused responses by the state and federal agencies involved, and lack of accountability to find out what happened."

## **Rep. Gibson wants Congress to investigate PFOA crisis**

WNYT Staff

Created: 05/11/2016 6:51 PM

Congressman Chris Gibson wants Congress to investigate the state and federal response to the PFOA crisis in Hoosick Falls and Petersburg.

Gibson submitted a letter to the head of the house committee on oversight and government reform.

He says critical questions remain unanswered regarding the actions of the federal Environmental Protection Agency, New York State Department of Health, and New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

He also singled out the state Legislature for going back on its promise to hold hearings on the matter.

## **Development project may have affected Hoosick Falls PFOA response**

By Lindsay Nielsen

May 10, 2016, 6:45 pm

HOOSICK FALLS, N.Y. (NEWS10) – Questions have been raised whether Hoosick Falls Mayor Dave Borge disregarded public health over fear that a building project, completed in March, would not happen if the developer knew about the water contamination.

Some say he did just that.

“Ok. I never said that, so you need to change that,” Mayor Borge said.

That was the mayor’s response when NEWS10’s Lindsay Nielsen confronted him at a public hearing for the Sequence Development project on Monday.

Back in February, I spoke with Assemblyman Steve McLaughlin who said he was disturbed by a phone conversation he had with Mayor Borge before the PFOA contamination problem went public. He says Mayor Borge told him he was concerned that if people knew about the water issue it would ruin the economic growth initiative known as Hoosick Rising.

“That part bothered me a little bit you know quite frankly that we need to be most concerned about the water first because who’s going to buy or rehab a building in a town of the water’s contaminated,” McLaughlin said.

At the center of that fear, according to McLaughlin and Michael Hickey who discovered the contamination is the Sequence Development building project on the corner of John and Main Street. It includes apartments and commercial space.

Hickey says it’s the reason for the slow response to the water contamination.

“At that point they were in the process of working on the Doherty’s corner building, which in my opinion, is why this process has been delayed,” Hickey said.

NEWS10’s Lindsay Nielsen asked CEO of Sequence Development Jeff Buell if he was ever told.

“We were not aware of the water problem here,” Buell said. “And so we found out about it in the middle of the project.”

Buell said they would have looked at the situation because it would have been so different.

## **Residents frustrated over contaminated water concerns in Hoosick Falls**

By Lindsay Nielsen

May 11, 2016, 6:52 pm

HOOSICK FALLS, N.Y. (NEWS10)

The water contamination crisis is continuing to plague people in Hoosick Falls.

Kevin Allard of Hoosick Falls says he's fed up with the lack of transparency and shady backdoor deals he says continue to happen in the village.

"I just don't believe them anymore," said Allard of

Allard was outraged to find out about a public hearing scheduled for Monday at 1 p.m. regarding the Sequence Development Project on the corner of John and Main Street.

Some are alleging the project is the very reason the response to the PFOA water contamination was delayed. They say Mayor Dave Borge didn't want the project developers to know about the water for fear they would back out. The developer told News 10 he was never told about the water problem.

A lot of people in Hoosick Falls are telling NEWS10 they feel like they just can't trust anything they're being told by the village anymore.

"I just don't believe them anymore," said Kevin Allard

Residents were told they'd be refunded for six months' worth of water bills, but so far haven't seen any money.

They're also still waiting on blood test results that they should have had by now.

There has also been some skepticism over the relationship between the village and one of the companies being held responsible for water contamination.

They've grown curious as to why the Mayor has become so close with Saint-Gobain.

As the village continues to work out an agreement with the corporation to resolve the crisis, people who live here have learned that the attorneys negotiating for the village are being paid by Saint-Gobain. NEWS10 asked the mayor if that posed a conflict of interest.

"No it does not, we've made great progress, we have temp GAC system showing PFOA levels of non-detect," said David Borge

Meanwhile, as the weather gets warmer many people in Hoosick Falls are starting to open their pools for the season.

The Department of Health says if you filled it last summer, it will likely have low levels of PFOA. But because the chemical is not easily absorbed through the skin, they say it's ok to swim in. So they say homeowners can use their own discretion on whether they want to drain and refill with filtered water.

Congressman Chris Gibson wrote a letter yesterday calling for a Congressional investigation into the handling of the response to the PFOA contamination in Hoosick Falls and Petersburg.

Elaine Sprunger who has lived in the area for 50 years says she'll be waiting to know the outcome of the investigation.

"I feel that there was some neglect in the sense of if it was known several years ago that it should have been publicized."

## **Schumer asks EPA to resolve Newburgh water crisis**

Mid-Hudson News

May 11, 2016

NEWBURGH – As the issues of whether Newburgh's Washington Lake water supply is contaminated enough to hurt people, where the chemicals are coming from and how do you stop them from entering the lake continue to remain unclear, US Senator Charles Schumer is asking the federal EPA to become actively involved in the situation.

State and federal agencies are working to resolve the problem, but Schumer told Mid-Hudson News on Wednesday he would like the federal environmental agency to take an active role.

"I have asked the EPA to come in and help them clean up their water, to give them advice and then there are federal programs that can help," he said on Wednesday.

City Manager Michael Ciaravino also released a letter he sent to regional EPA Administrator Judith Enck on May 2 asking for EPA to issue its revised health advisory for the chemical PFOS, one of the two found in the lake. At present, studies say the lake has 140 to 180 parts per trillion of PFOS while the danger threshold is 200 ppt. But, he said the Dutch government has set a permissible threshold of 65 ppt.

Ciaravino said it is believed that the EPA is going to issue a new health advisory with new PFOS levels below 200 ppt.

For now, he said the city "must take emergency action to reduce, or, if possible, to eliminate this contamination from our water system." That comes at a time when he said recent testing says a potential source of the chemicals is discharging over 700 ppt.

As a precaution for now, the city is using its backup resource, Brown's Pond for water, but once that supply is depleted, it will have to purchase water from the New York City aqueduct, but that could cost over \$200,000 per month. One alternative, Ciaravino said, could be for Newburgh to drill wells into the aquifers and secure water for its residents in that way.

Washington Lake: Dangerous chemical levels or not? (Photo: Jim Lennon)

WAMC

## Law Firm Begins Investigating PFOS Water Contamination In Newburgh

By Allison Dunne

May 10, 2016

The law firm that filed a class-action lawsuit against two companies connected with water contamination in Hoosick Falls is now investigating a water contamination issue in Newburgh.

Law firm Weitz & Luxenberg filed the suit on behalf of residents regarding PFOA water contamination in the upstate New York Village of Hoosick Falls in February. It now has its eyes on the City of Newburgh, where a sister chemical, PFOS, or Perfluorooctane Sulfonate, was found after testing in Silver Stream and Washington Lake, the main source of drinking water for Newburgh. City Manager Michael Ciaravino imposed a state of emergency May 2, which was lifted the following day as the city switched to a different water source, Brown's Pond. Mayor Judy Kennedy, speaking May 3, assured the public it has no PFOS contamination.

"The water that you now find in the faucet is now perfectly safe to drink. It has no PFOS in it as of now," said Kennedy.

Investigators are looking for the source of the contamination, which Kennedy said is not Washington Lake itself. Robin Greenwald, managing attorney of the Environmental and Consumer Protection Unit at Weitz & Luxenberg, says the firm fielded a few inquiries from Newburgh residents with news of the PFOS contamination.

"We had already been working on a PFOA water contamination in Hoosick Falls, New York. We're looking at it in Vermont, New Hampshire. We follow it on our own," says Greenwald. "And then when this hit the news, we got a few inquiries from people because they found out that we had been working PFOA issues."

Private wells in North Bennington, Vermont, among others, have been grappling with PFOA contamination in recent months. Greenwald says her firm could hold a community meeting in Newburgh. And she explains the purpose of such a meeting.

"It's a twofold purpose. One is so people can meet us and we learn so much from the community, more than they ever appreciate because they all think that they're there to learn from us, but we learn so much from them," Greenwald says. "And we'll have a meeting and we'll see who comes and see what kind of interest there is. Communities are different. Some communities don't want to deal with the adversarial process of litigation, and some do."

Greenwald says if the firm does hold a community meeting, it likely would be in a few weeks. At this stage, the law firm is trying to gauge the scale of the PFOS contamination.

"The information is much spottier in Newburgh than it was in Hoosick Falls," Greenwald says.

She is inviting residents to come forward with information on how they may have been affected by the contaminated water. Neither Kennedy nor Ciaravino responded to requests for comment concerning Weitz & Luxenberg. Meanwhile, back on May 3, Kennedy declared that PFOS levels were still below an Environmental Protection Agency threshold, levels that had been in the lake for a few years.

“At no time has the level of PFOS been over the EPA guidelines, which has been 200 parts per trillion,” says Kennedy. “Our measurement has been at 140 parts per trillion.”

The state Department of Health and Department of Environmental Conservation issued a May 9 letter to Newburgh’s mayor and city council members with results of drinking water samples taken in March. In addition, the letter shows results of non-drinking water samples, where, in most cases, the PFOS levels are much higher than in drinking water samples. The highest PFOS level — 5,900 parts per trillion — was from a Stewart Air National Guard Base retention pond sample during a high flow event. A DEC spokesman says one focus of the investigation into the source of contamination is on this retention pond and surrounding areas to see if stormwater runoff is a factor. PFOS is a chemical used in several products, including firefighting foam. The spokesman says the investigation is eyeing whether such foam was used near any of the water sources at this time.

DEC and DOH are assisting the city with investigating alternative drinking water and treatment options and will continue testing both drinking and non-drinking water sources.

WSJ

## **New Hampshire Finds Water-Purity Problem in Fourth Community**

### **Amherst added to places where perfluorooctanoic acid has been found in drinking water**

By Cameron McWhirter

May 11, 2016 3:58 p.m. ET

New Hampshire investigators added a fourth community Wednesday to their list of places in the state where they found unsafe levels of perfluorooctanoic acid, a potentially toxic chemical, in drinking water from private wells.

The state’s Department of Environmental Services said that water samples from four of 11 wells tested in Amherst, N.H., a town with a population of about 11,000 in the southern part of the state, contained the acid, known as PFOA, at levels above 100 parts per trillion. That is the starting level that New Hampshire officials consider unsafe.

Test results ranged from no traces of PFOA to 620 parts per trillion, according to a department statement. Manchester, N.H.-based Textiles Coated International Inc. operated a chemical plant in Amherst from 1985 to 2006.

New Hampshire officials have been looking for possible PFOA contamination of drinking



water in areas around former and current chemical plants since February, when Saint-Gobain Performance Plastics, a subsidiary of Saint-Gobain SA of France, notified the state that it found PFOA in water at a plant in Merrimack, N.H.

A Saint-Gobain spokeswoman has said the company is cooperating with officials in their investigations.

New Hampshire officials previously found unsafe PFOA levels in wells in Merrimack, Litchfield, Manchester—and now Amherst. They are awaiting test results from samples taken in Bedford and Londonderry, according to a state environmental department spokesman.

The state's probes into PFOA contamination follow similar investigations into PFOA in water around a former chemical plant in North Bennington, Vt., and a chemical plant in Hoosick Falls NY. PFOA-contaminated water was found in both places. Saint-Gobain operates the New York plant and used to operate the plant in North Bennington.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is expected to announce a permanent health advisory for PFOA that likely will be more stringent than a provisional advisory of 400 parts per trillion that it issued in 2009. The advisory is not a regulation that can be enforced by the EPA, but a health guideline issued for state environmental and health agencies to consider.

Edward Frechette, an engineering manager at Textiles Coated International, issued a statement Wednesday saying that the company is no longer using PFOA and the chemical was brought into the former plant in raw materials.

"TCI is fully committed to health, safety and environmental compliance," he said. "TCI will work with the [state environmental officials] to fix the problem."

New Hampshire state and local officials load boxes of bottled water after unsafe levels of the chemical PFOA were found in drinking water in Litchfield, N.H. Photo: Jim Cole/Associated Press

NH NPR

### **State Identifies PFOA Contamination In Amherst Well Water**

By Emily Corwin • 14 hours ago

Saint Gobain Performance Plastics weaves fabrics out of glass thread, then coats those fabrics in a Teflon-like dispersion.

Credit Emily Corwin / NHPR

Private wells near a former manufacturing plant in Amherst have tested high for levels of the chemical PFOA.

The contamination likely originates at a former Textiles Coated International plant. That company moved its operations to Manchester in 2005.

PFOA is the same compound found in high concentrations surrounding the St. Gobain Performance Plastics plant in Merrimack.

The chemical was found in four Amherst wells at concentrations above the state's threshold of concern, 100 parts per trillion. Some wells tested as high as 620 parts per trillion. The state is providing bottled water those four residences.

The announcement from DES comes less than a week after the department published a list of 44 sites in New Hampshire where PFOA and similar compounds have likely been used over the years.

So far, the department has only tested water at a few of those locations.

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